IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An image display controlling apparatus for adjusting the contrast of an image, said apparatus comprising:

discriminating means for receiving an image signal, for discriminating a signal format of the image signal, the signal format including at least one of lightness of the image and color of the image, and for generating a discrimination signal based on the result of said discriminating;

controller ~~signal generating~~ means for receiving the discrimination signal and for generating a control signal based on the received discrimination signal~~for controlling the contrast of a displayed image, in dependence on an input image signal~~;

level adjustment means for receiving the control signal and for adjusting ~~the level of~~ a luminance signal level of ~~said input~~ the image signal~~s,~~ based on the received control signal ~~supplied from said control signal generating means~~;

display means for ~~demonstrating a~~ displaying~~ed~~ an image ~~which is~~ in accordance ~~keeping~~ with ~~the level of~~ the adjusted luminance signal ~~adjusted by said~~ level ~~adjustment means~~;

illuminating means for illuminating said display means; and

illumination controlling means for receiving the control signal and for controlling the ~~illumination~~ brightness of the illumination provided by said illuminating means based on the control signal;~~, in a correlated fashion with~~

said level adjustment means operating in coordination with said illumination controlling means such that if said

illumination controlling means lowers the illumination brightness to a minimum brightness at which stable discharge current is maintained in said illuminating means without attaining a desired image contrast, said level adjustment means lowers the luminance signal level to further adjust the image contrast until the desired image contrast is attained~~based on a control signal supplied from said control signal generating means~~.

2.-4. (cancelled)

5. (currently amended) The image display controlling apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

display image generating means for converting ~~a displayed~~ the image~~,~~ which is in ~~keeping~~ accordance with the adjusted luminance signal level ~~adjusted by said level adjustment means,~~ into a signal matched to said display means.

6. (currently amended) The image display controlling apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said display means is a liquid crystal display.

7. (currently amended) An image display controlling method for adjusting the contrast of an image, said method comprising:

discriminating a signal format of an image signal, the signal format including at least one of lightness of the image and color of the image, and generating a discrimination signal based on the result of said discriminating step;

generating a control signal based on the discrimination signal~~for controlling the contrast of a displayed image, in dependence on an input image signal~~;

adjusting ~~the level of~~ a luminance signal level of ~~said input~~ the image signal~~,~~ based on the control signal ~~generated~~;

displaying an ~~demonstrating a displayed~~ image ~~which is~~ in accordance ~~keeping~~ with ~~the level of~~ the adjusted luminance signal level~~adjusted~~; and

controlling the ~~illumination~~ brightness of the illumination provided for ~~said~~ the displayed image ~~unit, in a correlated fashion with the adjustment of said luminance signal level,~~ based on the ~~generated~~ control signal;

said adjusting step being carried out in coordination with said step of controlling the brightness of the illumination such that if the illumination brightness is lowered to a minimum brightness at which stable discharge current is maintained without attaining a desired image contrast, the luminance signal level is lowered to further adjust the image contrast until the desired image contrast is attained.

8.-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) The image display controlling method according to claim 7, wherein ~~a~~ the displayed image~~,~~ which is in ~~keeping~~ accordance with the adjusted luminance signal level~~,~~ is converted into a signal matched to ~~said~~ a display unit.

12. (currently amended) The image display controlling method according to claim 7, wherein ~~said~~ the displayed image is displayed ~~unit is~~ using a liquid crystal display.

13. (currently amended) An imaging apparatus, comprising:

image signal generating means for imaging an object to generate an image signal;

discriminating means for receiving the image signal, for discriminating a signal format of the image signal, the signal format including at least one of lightness of the image and color of the image, and for generating a discrimination signal based on the result of said discriminating;

controller ~~signal generating~~ means for receiving the discrimination signal and for generating a control signal based on the received discrimination signal~~for controlling the contrast of a displayed image responsive to said image signal~~;

level adjustment means for receiving the control signal and for adjusting ~~the signal level of~~ a luminance signal level in ~~said~~ the input image signal~~,~~ based on ~~said~~ the received control signal~~ for controlling the contrast of a displayed image~~;

display means for displaying an ~~displayed~~ image ~~which is~~ in accordance ~~keeping~~ with ~~the signal level of~~ the adjusted luminance signal ~~adjusted by said~~ level ~~adjustment means~~;

illuminating means for illuminating said display means; and

illumination controlling means for receiving the control signal and for controlling the ~~illumination~~ brightness of the illumination provided by said illumination means ~~in correlated fashion with said level adjustment means~~ based on said control signal~~;~~ ~~supplied from said control signal generating means~~

said level adjustment means operating in coordination with said illumination controlling means such that if said illumination controlling means lowers the illumination brightness to a minimum brightness at which stable discharge current is maintained in said illuminating means without attaining a desired image contrast, said level adjustment means lowers the luminance signal level to further adjust the image contrast until the desired image contrast is attained.

14.-16. (cancelled)

17. (currently amended) The imaging apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising

display image generating means for converting ~~a displayed~~ the image~~,~~ which is in accordance ~~keeping~~ with the adjusted luminance signal level ~~adjusted by said level adjustment means,~~ into a signal matched to said display means.

18. (currently amended) The imaging apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said display means is a liquid crystal display.

19. (currently amended) A viewfinder device for ~~demonstrating~~ viewing an image ~~corresponding to~~ based on an image signal ~~for monitoring, supplied from~~ provided by an imaging apparatus, said viewfinder device comprising:

discriminating means for discriminating a signal format of the image signal, the signal format including at least one of lightness of the image and color of the image, and for generating a discrimination signal based on the result of said discriminating;

controller ~~signal generating~~ means for receiving the discrimination signal and for generating a control signal based on the received discrimination signal~~for controlling the contrast of a displayed image, in dependence on an input image signal~~;

level adjustment means for receiving the control signal and for adjusting ~~the level of~~ a luminance signal level of ~~said input~~ the image signals~~,~~ based on the received control signal ~~supplied from said control signal generating means~~;

display means for ~~demonstrating a~~ displaying~~ed~~ an image ~~which is~~ in accordance ~~keeping~~ with ~~the level of~~ the adjusted luminance signal ~~adjusted by said~~ level ~~adjustment means~~;

illuminating means for illuminating said display means; and

illumination controlling means for receiving the control signal and for controlling the ~~illumination~~ brightness of the illumination provided by said illuminating means based on the control signal;~~, in a correlated fashion with~~

said level adjustment means operating in coordination with said illumination controlling means such that if said illumination controlling means lowers the illumination brightness to a minimum brightness at which stable discharge current is maintained in said illuminating means without attaining a desired image contrast, said level adjustment means lowers the luminance signal level to further adjust the image contrast until the desired image contrast is attained~~based on a control signal supplied from said control signal generating means~~.

20.-22. (cancelled)

23. (currently amended) The viewfinder device according to claim 19, further comprising:

displayed image generating means for converting ~~a displayed~~ the image~~,~~ which is in ~~keeping~~ accordance with the adjusted luminance signal level~~adjusted by said level adjustment means,~~ into a signal matched to said display means.

24. (currently amended) The viewfinder device according to claim 19, wherein said display means is a liquid crystal display.

25. (currently amended) The viewfinder device according to claim 19, wherein said controller ~~signal generating~~ means includes ~~a communication function~~ means for exchanging the control information with said imaging apparatus,~~;~~ and ~~wherein~~ the viewfinder device makes an inquiry to ~~said~~ the imaging

apparatus as to whether ~~or not~~ the imaging apparatus ~~has a function of~~ is controlling the ~~illumination~~ brightness of the illumination provided by said illuminating means in ~~correlated fashion~~ coordination with ~~the function of~~ at least one of controlling the contrast of the displayed image and~~/or the function of~~ controlling the contrast of the displayed image.